DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 138 397 RC 009 850

TITLE Report to the American Indian People.
INSTITUTION National Indian Youth Council, Albuquerque, N. Mex.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 9p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Accountability; *American Indians; *Annual Reports; Civil Rights; Education; Federal Government; Health; International Relations; Mass Media; Natural Resources; *Organizations (Groups); *Policy; *Political Issues; *Program Descriptions
IDENTIFIERS *National Indian Youth Council

ABSTRACT

Presenting a brief historical profile, program descriptions, synopses of political issues, and a policy statement (1973), this 1975 annual report on the National Indian Youth Council includes: (1) Programs (NIYC/Comprehensive Employment and Training Act manpower development; Investigative Journalism Training Project; Ex-Offender Program; San Juan County Research Project; Litigation Program; Youth Program); (2) Natural Resource Development Issues (coal gasification on the Navajo Reservation and American Indian water rights); (3) Civil Rights Issues ("The Farmington Report: A Culture of Conflict"; Farmington law suits; violence at Acoma Pueblo; Indian preference; Fairchild occupation; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission complaints; arts and crafts fraud; Cherokee religious project); (4) Education Issues (Intermountain law suit; student bill of rights; Hammon School; mobile school for dropouts; Milwaukee Area Technical College); (5) Health Issues (Lewis case and American Indian Nurses Association); (6) Trust Responsibility Issues (Tewa Tesuque; Creek government case; Southern Paiute claims; Navajo evictions; Navajo-AFL/CIO agreement; Santa Ana Pueblo); (7) Mass Media Issues (New Mexico press; Federal Communications Commission petition; Indian film company); (8) Policy Statement to the American Indian People. (JC)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

REPORT

TO THE AMERICAN INDIAN PEOPLE

1975

ED138397

In history and principle, the National Indian Youth Council is a process, not an event. The process began in 1952 when Indian clubs at various universities began to form regional associations. It came to fruition during the Conference of American Indians (Chicago 1960) when non-Indian scholars discussing Indian problems invited Indians for the first time to participate in their deliberations. The well-known "Chicago Conference" had two effects: it demonstrated the absurdity of white scholars trying to discuss and define Indian problems; and the necessity for a national Indian organization to define their own problems and offer solutions consistent with Indian culture and tradition.

NIYC was created in Gallup, New Mexico, by ten college educated Indians who had met at the Conference and envisioned that NIYC would become an organization of service to Indian People based upon the Indian system of agreement. NIYC is not a conventional-type of organization because the organizers agreed that "organizations rearrange history but movements make history" and the uniqueness of the NIYC movement has not diminished during its 15 year existence because NIYC continues to attract the type of Indian people who believe in its original concept of purpose.

NIYC is entirely Indian in form and function and its nine member Board of Directors and staff operate on the traditional council system. Decision making is a process of consideration for all those involved, consultation, and trust. Policy decisions are not made, they are grown. The present situation of Indian people is the result of a complex historical, political, legal, social and economic process and the problems demand solutions totally different from those employed by other racial and ethnic minorities.

There are 482 recognized tribes living on 266 different reservations and in various rural and urban communities. Each tribe has a distinct history, thus each tribe has different problems and needs. What works for one tribe does not necessarily work for another tribe and NIYC approaches and responds to the variety of problems so differently that it may appear to the uninitiated that NIYC does not have a consistent philosophy or specific direction. To NIYC this direction is as logical as the growth of a tree.

NIYC's objective is the preservation and enrichment of traditional tribal communities. NIYC views individuals as part of their community and there is no distinction between the two. While NIYC is concerned with individualistic problems such as economic poverty, employment discrimination, health care, education, the approach to these problems includes the community as a whole and each Indian community situation must be understood and considered before any action is taken.

NIYC has a large membership with strong ties to many different communities and has remained involved with these communities because it is capable of evolving specific projects to serve the specific needs of these communities.

Because NIYC deals with Indian problems in the context of the community and develops solutions in the same manner, it has contradicted many scholars and bureaucrats who tend to apply national solutions to all Indians. But NIYC continues to prove that Indian People know what is best for their communities and continues to work towards their goals.

In summary, specific methods to be used by NIYC were purposely left unwritten by the organizers to allow more freedom and flexibility when dealing with different problems of Indian People. NIYC concerns are people concerns and the scope of involvement is unlimited due to its concept of an Indian organization.

Consideration of the total tribal community, the preservation of its cultural society, and its future development are the goals of the National Indian Youth Council.

Programs

NIYC CETA

NIYC is a prime sponsor for an Indian manpower program funded by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of the Department of Labor. The sponsorship extends to all Indians in New Mexico who are not living on a reservation but live in the urban and rural areas. In addition to the central office in Albuquerque, there are field offices in Farmington, Gallup, and Santa Fe.

RC009850

The philosophy of the program is not only to deal directly with Indian manpower problems, but also to empower the Indian community. Before the CETA program, Indian People in the state could receive services or exercise their influence only through tribal agencies. Now the 12½ per cent of New Mexico's Indian population has a new means through which to strive for their just share of the economic and political life of the state.

A liaison officer from the Employment Security Commission (ESC) has been working in the NIYC Albuquerque CETA Office as part of NIYC's effort to open up the ESC organization to Indian People throughout the state. NIYC-CETA field offices are now ESC liaison offices and have become a vital part of the communities they serve.

Locating legal assistance, medical care, and day care services for children of program participants have been important tasks for NIYC-CETA as it deals with the over-all employment needs. It coordinates its efforts with the Albuquerque Urban Indian Center, the All Indian Pueblo Council CETA, Indian Health Service, the Navajo CETA program and the various manpower programs offered by city, county, and state agencies.

Ninety-nine Indian People were assisted through the Vocational Education Component of the program. This component allowed individuals to upgrade their skills at the Technical Vocational Institute

and the Southwest Indian Polytechnical Institute, both located in Albuquerque.

The Work Experience Program places over 320 individuals in NIYC-CETA funded positions in which they received on-the-job training before being placed in unsubsidized employment. This program has been used to create positions in the Albuquerque Public School System and the Albuquerque Human Rights Commission. In Farmington and Gallup, NIYC-CETA has funded positions for Indian People to work as jailors, jail translators, and alcoholism counselors.

The Co-op Development Program is designed to assist Indian arts and crafts co-ops to effectively train their members. This program will be carried on until the co-ops are self-sufficient.

This year more than 5,000 Indian People were served at the four NIYC-CETA offices.

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM TRAINING PROJECT

To fill the need for Indian journalists and develop a research capability in the Indian community, this Investigative Journalism Training Project was instituted. Twenty five students completed the project with training in corporate, legal, governmental and environmental research, writing, interviewing, and using data to affect change.

Emphasis was placed on writing concepts and other communication skills. Articles by the students appeared in major Indian and non-Indian publications. The results of this training will be felt throughout Indian Country for a long time, as many of the graduates have already embarked on action research and writing projects either for NIYC or in their own communities.

EX-OFFENDER PROGRAM

Indian people with experience in prison have always been a concern of NIYC. On its CETA Manpower program ex-offenders have first priority. A special coordinator was hired who visited Indians in prison, arranged their parole, and placed them in employment or training. Ex-offenders on the program receive counseling on a continuing basis. A total of 35 Indian ex-offenders participated in the program during the year.

SAN JUAN COUNTY RESEARCH PROJECT

San Juan County, New Mexico, is one of the major "energy centers" in the country. Over 50 per cent of its population is Indian. The Four Corners Power Plant is already located there and six coal gasification plants are slated to be built there in the near future. NIYC has begun a study to find out exactly who controls the county and how energy decisions are made.

This study will last a year and will determine how multi-national corporations control this area's resources and people. Since no study of this nature concerning an entire county has ever been done before, it will create a model for the study of other crucial energy areas of the country. A report will be prepared at the project's completion and will be used for community organizing in San Juan County and to provide insight into improving strategy for fighting corporate exploitation.

Nine researchers are participating in the project. All materials and date collected will be maintained by NIYC for the continuing use of the Indian community.

LITIGATION PROGRAM

NIYC has long been involved in legal matters and this year NIYC has obtained the services of two full-time attorneys, a part-time Indian law student and a paralegal. NIYC has also been fortunate in obtaining the services on a pro bono basis of many other attorneys around the country.

NIYC has a broad view of litigation in that it sees legal actions as organizing tools around which Indian communities can be mobilized and strengthened. While litigation is just one method of dealing with a particular problem, other tactics to solve it are always going on simultaneously. Rather than being a separate entity of its own, the program is an integral part of all other NIYC efforts in the community.

The program now has six major cases in court throughout the country. The major concerns of the program are education, health, trust responsibilities, and natural resources. The cases are described under appropriate categories in this report.

While the program is not involved in criminal cases, it makes an effort to find other attorneys in criminal matters brought to its attention.

YOUTH PROGRAM

NIYC has established a weekend and evening program to combat the problem of delinquency and unemployment among Indian youth. NIYC is also working on a variety of projects, such as the Albuquerque School-on-Wheels and the University of New Mexico's summer programs to assist the youth.

Issues

NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Coal Gasification

During the past year, NIYC has been developing the capability to effectively deal with perhaps the most complex issue facing Indian people today; the proposed coal gasification and stripmining development on the Navajo reservation by WESCO and El Paso Natural Gas.

Coal gasification is a process of burning coal to make synthetic natural gas. Six plants, costing six billion dollars, are scheduled to be built on the reservation and 57,000 acres of Navajo land is to be stripmined. NIYC has opposed the plants for the following reasons:

- The opposition to the plants by the Navajo People who live in the affected area;
- The disruption of traditional Navajo life and religion;
- The impossibility of land reclamation;
- The toxic emissions;
- The lack of water for both the plants and the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project, a tribal enterprise;
- The influx of non-Indians on the reservation and the creation of a non-Indian boom town.

NIYC has done a tremendous amount of independent research on every major aspect of the proposed development and has prepared an on-going series of comprehensive information packets.

In the past year, NIYC has:

- Sponsored several informational meetings in the Four Corners area for the local Navajo communities;
- Held major press conferences on the corporate exploitation of mineral resources on Indian land;
- Testified at federal environmental impact statement hearings;
- Presented information that was later used to help force El Paso to withdraw its permit application from the Federal Power Commission;
- Participated in numerous seminars on gasification;
- Held several meetings with WESCO representatives, including one all day meeting with the top company officials;
- Sponsored an official delegate from the Navajo Tribal Council to testify at a key Congressional hearing on energy development and Indian water rights;
- Helped secure a decision by the Navajo Tribal Council to table the renewal of El Paso's coal mining lease;
- Participated in the successful opposition to a Congressional bill which would have provided a multi-billion dollar federal loan guarantee program for the gasification industry.

Water Rights

NIYC is continuing to do major research into Indian water rights and is maintaining extensive files on this subject. NIYC believes that Indian People, especially in the Southwest, cannot achieve self-determination without sufficient water to maintain their land base. NIYC hopes to publish and distribute this material to aid tribes in water rights litigation.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Farmington

The Farmington Report: A Conflict of Cultures was released by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission in August, 1975. NIYC was involved both in testifying before the Commission and in the preparation of the **Report**. NIYC and the Coalition for Navajo Liberation (CNL) were instrumental in bringing about the Commission's hearings in Farmington, New Mexico.

The **Report** documented racial discrimination in education, health, employment and the administration of justice. What the Indian People of Farmington had been proclaiming for years has been officially confirmed by an agency of the U.S. Government.

The **Report** has been an important organizing tool in this bordertown which makes a large part of its living from the Navajo Reservation. It has already led to several law suits and has opened up some employment opportunities for Indian People in Farmington and San Juan County.

Farmington Law Suits

Two Navajo families in the Farmington area have filed separate multi-million dollar law suits against the City of Farmington in connection with the deaths of their family members in the city jail. NIYC did the initial investigations of the deaths and arranged for attorneys for the families. Navajos routinely die in the Farmington City Jail and this is the first time the city will have to answer to these atrocities.

Violence At Acoma Pueblo

Violence against Indian People in the towns bordering reservations has been a matter of great concern to NIYC. At Acoma Pueblo, non-Indian youths have always gone onto the Pueblo for a "good time", harassing the Pueblo residents. This year, the activity resulted in several murders and rapes of Indian People.

NIYC is prepared to take appropriate legal action and other steps to protect the Acoma People. NIYC is involved in the investigations of the incidents of violence and intimidations that have occurred so far.

Indian Preference

Since Indian Preference in employment and promotions became a court ordered policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), it has systematically tried to undermine the policy. To counter this situation, NIYC has filed many EEO complaints with the BIA across the country on behalf of the Indian employees. NIYC is particularly interested in applying the Indian Preference Policy to protect the Indian employees against the Bureau's "reduction in force" programs.

Fairchild Occupation

In February, the Fairchild Plant in Shiprock on the Navajo Reservation was taken over by supporters of the American Indian Movement (AIM). The complaints were against poor working conditions and wages. NIYC did an analysis of the lease between the tribe and Fairchild and found it to be similar to colonial leases enjoyed by Fairchild in underdeveloped countries around the globe. The company received a Federal subsidy and all other benefits while Navajo employees worked for only the minimum wage.

As a result of the occupation, the plant closed and 450 Navajos were put out of work. NIYC worked with tribal councilman, Fred Johnson, to bring in a new industry under more favorable conditions for the Shiprock area.

EEOC Complaints

Out of a growing sense of awareness of discrimination in employment against Indian People by the State of New Mexico and the University of New Mexico, NIYC filed Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) class action complaints against both institutions. These actions were taken in conjunction with the All Indian Pueblo Council and are now under active investigation by the EEOC.

Weahkee Case

The EEOC which is charged with investigating discrimination complaints also came under fire by NIYC for discrimination policies of its own.

NIYC has filed a racial discrimination suit against the EEOC for Clarence Weahkee, a Cochiti Pueblo. During his brief employment with EEOC, he had filed several complaints with them about his treatment and upon his removal from EEOC, he learned that other minority people had also filed complaints which were never processed. The U.S. District Court in New Mexico has dismissed the case however, other federal courts have handed down decisions contrary to the New Mexico Court decision. A case has been filed in Washington, D.C. and two others are slated.

CULTURAL RIGHTS

Gallup Ceremonial

NIYC continues its opposition to the Gallup, New Mexico Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial by publicly encouraging Indian People to boycott the event. For 53 years, the Ceremonial has existed as a profit-making tourist attraction for the Gallup business community.

Individuals involved with NIYC opposed the annual state appropriation for this event and questioned the manner in which last year's appropriation was spent by the Ceremonial Association. A state audit later found the Ceremonial Association guilty of mismanagement of public funds.

Arts and Crafts Fraud

The sale of hundreds of millions of dollars of phony Indian jewelry threatens to drive the Indian artisan out of business. To prevent this, NIYC distributed information warning consumers throughout the Southwest about fraudulent and over-priced craft items.

NIYC also sought to get strict enforcement of state consumer protection laws and pushed the National Indian Arts and Crafts Board to live up to its responsibility to protect the Indian artisan.

Cherokee Religious Project

Through a grant from the Allman Brothers Band, NIYC is assisting the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in North Carolina to re-establish a traditional Cherokee religious ground for the entire tribe. The grounds will be inaugurated with a Green Corn Dance which has not been done for the entire tribe since 1934.

EDUCATION

Intermountain Law Suit

A million dollar law suit was filed by NIYC on behalf of ten students against the Secretary of Interior and various BIA officials for violating student rights at Intermountain Boarding School in Brigham City, Utah. Before the suit was filed, more than fifty students were expelled and sent home without a hearing or any opportunity to defend themselves. This is the second time NIYC has filed a lawsuit against Intermountain for denying Indian students their basic rights.

Student Bill of Rights

One of NIYC's major efforts has been to secure the adoption and enforcement of the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities by the education division of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. When the Bureau adopted a partial version of the Code, NIYC correctly foresaw that BIA schools would start applying the skimpy version in any way they saw fit while NIYC has continued to push the BIA toward adopting a more specific and expanded version of the Code.

Hammon School

NIYC was instrumental in the formation of the Institute of the Southern Plains, Hammon, Oklahoma, the only Indian controlled secondary school in the state.

Recently Senators Bellmon and Bartlett have tried to close the school because the Indian students have withdrawn from the public school which is now threatened with closure for lack of students. NIYC has been assisting the Indian community in protecting their school's funding from political attacks.

School on Wheels

Under a contract with the Albuquerque Public Schools, NIYC is operating a school for Indian drop-outs in Albuquerque. The purpose of the school is to assist, in an Indian way, students who cannot relate to the Anglo school system. At present, twenty-five students participate and last year seven students graduated.

MATC Occupation

For almost a year, the NIYC Chapter at the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) in Wisconsin has been occupying a room at the school in protest over the treatment of Indian students. The occupation is continuing twenty-four hours a day. The students are demanding more attention from MATC to Indian cultural and social needs, adequate office space for the NIYC and Indian students activities, better placement of Indian students, and a general audit of the institution. The occupation has received widespread support in the Wisconsin Indian community. At this writing, negotiations with college officials are continuing and no arrests have been made.

HEALTH

Lewis Case

NIYC has filed a class action suit against the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) and the Director of the Indian Health Service (IHS) seeking to compel IHS to stop discriminating between Indian People solely on the basis of residence in the delivery of contract health care.

IHS provided direct care at their own facilities and contract care at non-IHS facilities which treat problems that the IHS facilities are not equipped to handle. However, the IHS has arbitrarily created two classes of Indians; "reservation" and "off-reservation" and has limited contract health care to only those classified as "reservation." NIYC is contending that all Indians should receive equal consideration for contract health care as provided for in the 1924 Snyder Act.

This case will have far reaching effects and additional action may be taken to compel the Secretary of HEW to write new regulations for the operation of IHS.

PHS Operation

NIYC has worked closely with the American Indian Nurses Association, which it was instrumental in founding, to recruit Indian young people into the nursing profession. NIYC has also led various protests at Indian Health Service facilities around the country for their mistreatment of Indian patients and their abuse of Indian employees.

TRUST RESPONSIBILITY

Tewa Tesuque

NIYC is providing legal assistance to the Tesuque Pueblo in their attempt to void a 99-year lease. The lease takes one-third of their reservation lands and very valuable water rights. Councilmen and other Pueblo members feel they were defrauded during the lease negotiations and the planned "golf resort sub-division community" would seriously interfere with their religious life. In the latter part of this year, one of the individuals represented by NIYC was appointed governor of the Pueblo.

Creek Government Case

NIYC is representing a group of Creek Indians in Oklahoma in an effort to reinstate their traditional tribal government.

In 1867, the Creek Nation had a constitution and tribal laws modeled after the U.S. federal government system. Its legislative body was the Creek National Council composed of the House of Kings and the House of Warriors which functioned effectively until 1911.

In 1906, Congress passed an Act which allowed the President to appoint the "Principal Chiefs" for the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Creeks, Chicksaws, Seminole, Choctaws). The Interior Department led the Creek Tribe to believe that their traditional form of government no longer existed and told them they could not meet without Interior approval which was never given. Soon the BIA took the same position and the end result was a puppet government which became unresponsive to the needs of the tribal membership.

NIYC is representing several Creeks in this case which contends that the 1867 Constitution was never abolished and that the U.S. should recognize it. One very important issue which may result from this suit is the question of the resources which were signed away by the Presidentially appointed "Principal Chief" of the Creek Nation.

Southern Paiute Claims

NIYC is representing between two and three thousand Indian people who are eligible to participate in the land claims judgement of the Southern Paiute Tribe.

During the notification of the Southern Paiute claims, the BIA failed to publicize the enrollment requirements and deadline in the four corner region of Utah, Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico. NIYC is conducting a class action damage suit to recover a full share for those who were left out of these claims.

In addition, the federal government put the awarded claims money that belongs to the Southern Paiute minors into the Las Vegas (Nevada) Valley Trust Company. The company was given permission by the government to invest this money, amounting to $48 million, into common stock and NIYC is alledging this practice is a breach of trust.

Navajo Evictions

More than 8,000 Navajos in northwestern New Mexico live in a patchwork of Indian and non-Indian land called the Checkboard Area. This year the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced plans to force all Navajos to move from the Checkerboard Area alledging that the land belonged to the government and that the Navajos were "squatters" and illegally occupying the land they had lived on for centuries.

NIYC launched a strong protest campaign and pointed out that the apparent reasons BLM wanted to move the Navajos off the land was because the area is very rich in uranium and coal deposits. BLM finally responded that they would not force any evictions until further studies were made.

Navajo – AFL-CIO Agreement

NIYC worked with several Navajo tribal councilmen to challenge a controversial labor agreement signed without tribal consultation between the Navajo chairman and presidents of 14 international trade unions. The net effect of this agreement would have turned over all labor regulations and employment control to the unions thereby taking these matters away from the tribe.

If this agreement holds up, the unions will become a powerful force on the reservation, superceding the local chapter houses and the traditional tribal institutions and it is viewed as a direct threat to Navajo sovereignty.

Santa Ana Pueblo

NIYC has been engaged by the Santa Ana Pueblo to act as their legal counsel and it is now working on several matters for the tribe. NIYC is seeking to have the Santa Fe Railroad to make certain repairs where its tracks crosses tribal land. Also NIYC is seeking the reacquisition of 8,000 acres of Santa Ana land. In addition NIYC is representing the interests of the tribe in a recreation project the city of Albuquerque and the Bureau of Reclamation are trying to force them to accept.

MASS MEDIA

New Mexico Press

As part of the Investigative Journalism Training Project, NIYC did a survey of newspapers in New Mexico. The report documented how many newspapers failed to cover Indian news, presented what they do cover in a highly racist fashion, and their failure to hire Indian reporters. The report received wide coverage and angry reaction from the newspapers. Many newspapers spent more space denying this report than they did covering any single Indian news story all year.

FCC Petition

In 1971, NIYC with a coalition of Chicano organizations filed a petition to deny KGGM-TV in Albuquerque their license to operate. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) was asked to withdraw the station's license based on lack of minority programming and lack of minority employment. This year the FCC set a date for a hearing on the petition in 1976. This was the first time the FCC had ever set a hearing on the revocation of a station's license based on racial discrimination. NIYC and the Chicano coalition is being represented by the Communications Project of the United Church of Christ. NIYC believes that there is a possibility of making new laws at this hearing which will benefit all minorities.

Indian Film Company

Through a grant from Marlon Brando, NIYC has subcontracted with Larry Little Bird of Circle Films, an Indian production company. The purpose of this grant is to put Circle Films on a firm financial footing by allowing it to distribute the movie **House Made of Dawn**, based on the book by Scott Momaday. If this distribution is successful, the company will make a movie of the Frank Waters book, **The Man Who Killed The Deer.** At present, Circle Films is making a series of Indian documentaries for Public Television in Oregon.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Mexican Meetings

NIYC has been meeting in Mexico on a monthly basis with a group of Mexican Indian community and religious leaders. The purpose of these meetings is to create international cooperation between Indian tribes who find themselves divided by the United-States--Mexico border, and to work on matters of mutual concern.

Papago Border Problems

Through NIYC board member Michael Rios and the Papageria Research Center, NIYC has been helping the Papago people. There are Papago communities on both sides of the United States-Mexico border which result in many problems for the tribe. The Research Center has done extensive organizing of Papagos on both sides of the border. NIYC is assisting them to create an international Papago organization. Mr. Rios and the Research Center are also involved in the problems of their people on the reservation and in tribal government.

POLICY STATEMENT
TO
THE AMERICAN INDIAN PEOPLE

Adopted
Annual Meeting, Stewart, Nevada
August 11, 1973

The National Indian Youth Council since its founding in 1961, has participated in many changes in the Indian World. We are products of the poverty, despair, and discrimination pushed on our people from the outside. We are products of chaos. Chaos in our tribes. Chaos in our families. Chaos in our personal lives.

NIYC dedicates itself to the restoration of ourselves as a people. Our survival as a people is the policy that guides our actions. All our activities are dedicated to this end.

We are also products of a rich and ancient culture which supercedes and makes bearable any oppressions we are forced to bear.

NIYC believes in tribes. We believe that one's basic identity should be with his tribe. We believe in tribalism. Despite the fact that tribes have been played off against one another, we believe that tribalism is what has caused us to endure. Our purpose is not to create one kind of Indian but make young Indian People more effective members of their tribal communities.

NIYC will make itself into an effective institution that will foster brotherhood among tribes.

The protection of our land and water and other natural resources are of utmost importance to us. Our culture not only exists in time but in space as well. If we lose our land, we are adrift like a leaf on a lake which will float aimlessly and then dissolve and disappear.

Our land is more than the ground upon which we stand and sleep, and in which we bury our dead. The land is our spiritual mother whom we can no easier sell than our own physical mother. NIYC will resist, to the death if necessary, any more of our mother being sold into slavery.

Survival of Indians as a people means the survival of Indians as a community. A community is the interdependence of Indian people from which flows our religion and our sense of well-being. We affirm the tribal community as a workable and satisfying way to survive in this and other centuries. The wisdom of living this way for thousands of years has taught us this.

All our efforts will be directed toward the protection and enrichment of our communities.

We affirm the validity of all Indians of all ages. We resist the introduction of false generation gaps into our communities. We do not necessarily identify exclusively with someone because he is the same age as we are. We identify with people because they are our relatives, our friends, or our Indian brothers. We do not believe that older people or young people should be made a category or race apart from the rest of our people. We are not young people or old people but simply Indians of different ages.

We will strive to foster brotherhood of all Indians. We will not bring to disruption or chaos the normal and traditional process of government or personal relationships in any Indian community or Indian reservation. If there is a great injustice in an Indian community or reservation and we feel it imperative to support one group of Indians against another, we will do so taking care not to endanger or destroy the tribe we are seeking to serve.

More specifically, we support the following:

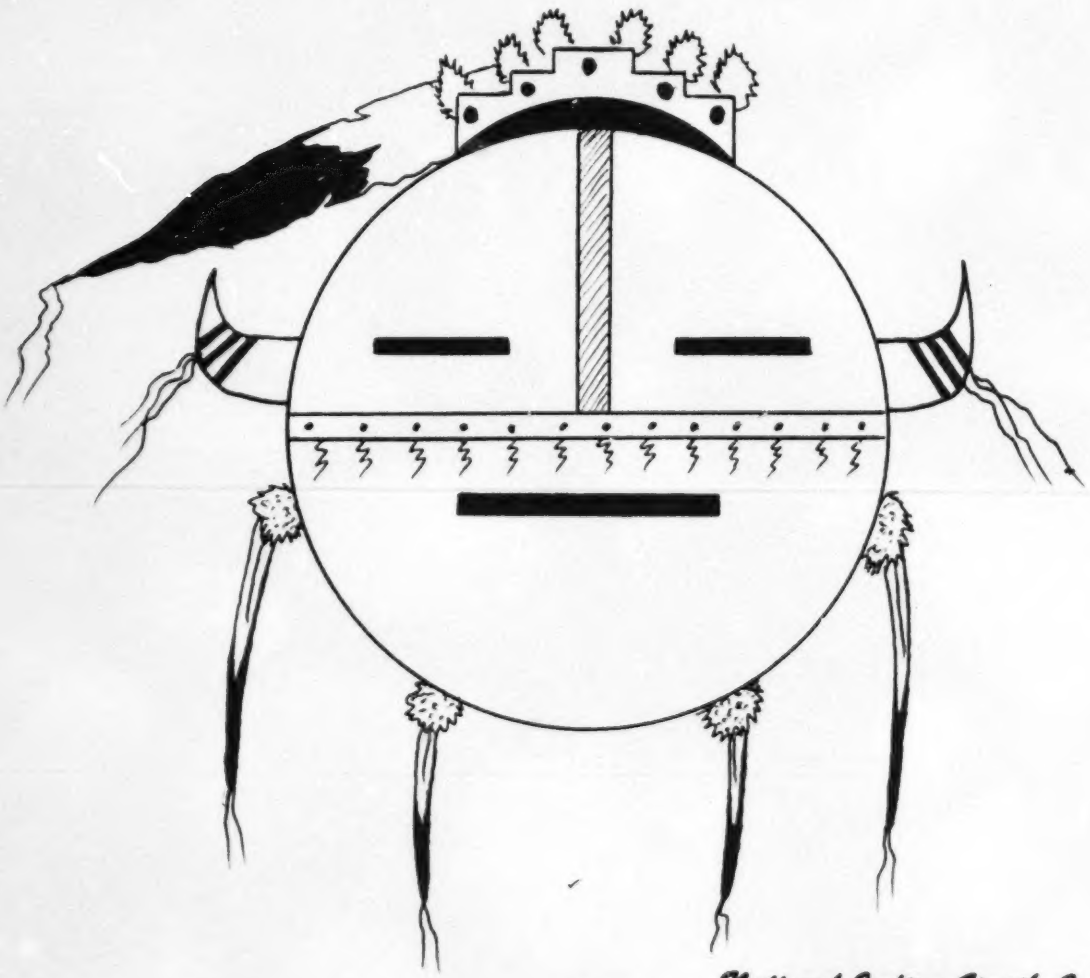
1. Continuation of our special relationship with the federal government, particularly the trust relationship regarding our natural resources; and the provision of health and social services by the government;
2. Continuation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, re-organized along the lines to making it a service under Indian control and making it as efficient as possible;
3. The concept of Indian tribes as sovereign nations having the power of self-government on the reservation and equal rights as citizens off the reservations;
4. The honoring of all treaties and other agreements entered into between the tribes and the government of the United States;
5. The return of all lands taken from the various tribes without legal process;
6. A government policy guaranteeing Indian people a 100 million acre land base in perpetuity;
7. The establishment of an Indian college system under Indian control;

8. The contracting of all Bureau of Indian Affairs educational functions such as boarding schools, scholarship programs and educational services to Indian tribes and Indian organizations;
9. The fight to ensure that our people get a fair share of monies from government programs outside of the BIA;
10. The correction of all forms of discrimination against our people no matter where they occur;
11. The building of bridges and relationships between ourselves and all other Indian brothers in the Western Hemisphere;
12. The continuation and enrichment of our native religion and the resistance of other religions in our reservations and communities which do not serve the interest of our people;
13. Indian control of all economic ventures on our reservations or in our communities;
14. Revision or abrogation of civil rights acts which do not preserve traditional Indian ways of solving disputes, free the tribes from outside interference by the courts, and maintain traditional Indian religious patterns;
15. Special programs for our people who find themselves in prison and the right for all Indian people to be tried before a jury of their peers.

In conclusion, we pledge not to define ourselves in the terms of non-Indians or become the objects of their culture. We will base our actions on what is appropriate, drawing our strength from our traditions, and not basing our actions on what the non-Indian world wants us to be.

Finally, we believe that all Indians who fight for the survival of our people are warriors whether they work at the highest levels or simply go about their daily affairs affirming themselves and their people. We will not give up on Indians who oppose our ideals or actions. We believe in the capacities of people to grow and change, both ourselves and others, and will maintain a dialogue in the spirit of brotherhood with all our people.

We affirm that the purpose of the warrior is to give courage to his people. We hope to give courage by our thoughts and actions. We pledge to remain faithful to our mission so that our Indian People may once again take their rightful place in the land we once owned.



National Indian Youth Council, Inc.

201 Hermosa N.E.

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87108